

## Tin Can Telephone No. 6



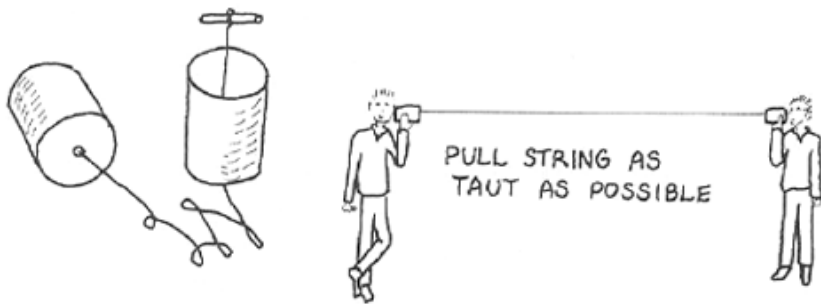
# TIN CAN TELEPHONE



**zines, media, music  
& life**

**Issue 6**

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Tin Can Telephone is edited & sometimes  
written by DJ Frederick



**Thanks for reading  
send all communications  
via shortwave or  
tin can telephone**

irregularity. I'm usually trying to move closer to the experience of a subject, to the feeling of it.

That's just one aspect of what makes improv interesting to me, though. I could go on for far too long about it. Especially about improvising with others, which is a very different and exhilarating experience than going it alone. Some of my favorite things to listen to these days are encounters between improvisers, free jazz, that sort of thing. The interplay between skill and accident, the compromises and concessions between players; the role of failure and sudden miraculous invention. There's nothing else quite like it.... -30-



Statement on capitalism: I don't make any money on these zines. In fact, I don't even break even. I'd just as soon give them away (though I'm happy when people buy them). I come from an "amateur journalism" perspective where zines, letters, broadsides, etc. are shared and traded, not vended. Zines are not a commodity. I don't need anyone to buy my zine to feel valued. Making zines is my passion. My love gets poured out in these pages. It has nothing to do with money. So please share & share alike. What is gifted freely feeds the heart and soul.

Love is the energy of Creation.  
Capitalism—not so much. - DJ Frederick

## Kearsarge Mountain Radio update

In the previous issue of Tin Can Telephone I wrote about my plans for a Part 15 low power radio station in Warner. Wink wink, nudge nudge, know what I mean? The only reason I'm not going to tell you that it's a PIE RIGHT station is just in case this zine falls into the hands of the FCC they can't accuse me of anything.

Given the realities of the radio station license process, access to the airwaves is almost impossible for 99.99% of Americans. Plus the FCC does not license low power community stations. Even LPFM stations need to be a huge operation that take tens of thousands of dollars' worth of equipment, mountains of bureaucracy and a government recognized non-profit organization to launch. There are no opportunities to license 5 to 25 watt community stations.

Currently I have five (count them – five!) transmitters. Three FM transmitters, an AM transmitter and a shortwave transmitter. I am working on obtaining a longwave transmitter. So far I only have one FM transmitter and the shortwave transmitter in use, but expect to add the others eventually, each with its own programming and music. Response has been positive – people are actually listening on FM. So I am encouraged to continue and expand my efforts. Though few people will be able to hear WKMR on shortwave or longwave, it is fun just to tinker with electronics. I'm broadcasting FM Odyssey, and some documentary shows, podcasts, and my own radio shows. I'm having fun, and at the end of the day, that's what matters.

## Top 10 Cereal Box Records by Mr. Breakfast



In the late 60's and throughout the 70's, Rice Krispies wasn't the only cereal making noise. Cut-out cardboard records called flexi records were a popular cereal premium. The sound quality wasn't very good and they tended to warp days after they were cut from the cereal box, but little kids didn't mind. It was a thrill to hear their favorite band or cereal mascot. Often, it was the first record a kid would own. Most little kids today are unaware that albums and record players ever existed, let alone records that you cut out of your favorite cereal box. Well, believe it kids!

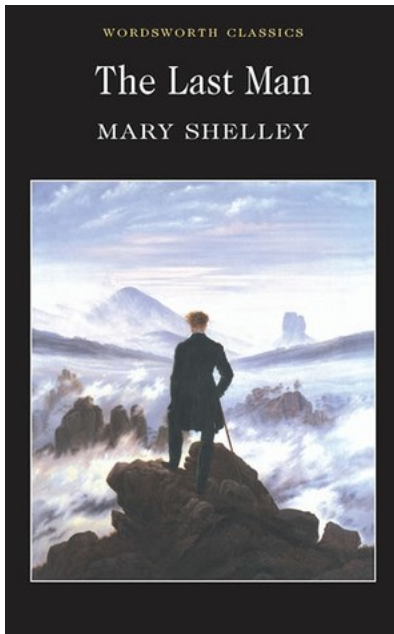
### #10. Life Cereal Rock Music Mysteries

This cut-out record came from Life Cereal. It was part of "a series of three great music mystery games." To play the music mystery game, you would listen to the record for clues and guess the titles to four songs. The side of the cereal box had an entry form for the contest.

are expressing themselves and exploring ideas almost purely out of love and curiosity for the medium and the process, rather than trying to craft something that is saleable or palatable to a moneyed audience. In other words, they aren't trying to "make it;" they've made it, they're here. And so getting to know their work is a more intimate and personal process and, for me, a more rewarding one. Underground art also acts as a very welcome counterweight to corporate forces just by showing people what is possible. This is really an extraordinary thing and it's easy to take it for granted. Popular culture is extremely limited and extremely limiting: it portrays creativity as the dominion of a very few select individuals operating within a narrow band of what is considered to be marketable at this particular moment in history, and marginalizes anything outside those parameters. But finding out that, on the contrary, there is a huge sea of underground creativity accessible to everyone is powerfully transformative. It opens up possibilities, and forces us to question all the other sorts of lines that have drawn for us to live inside. It promotes a certain cultural skepticism.

This is related at least obliquely to what interests me so much about improvised music. Improv forces the performer and the listener to think about structure, and boundary, and form—and to both seize and abandon them at the same time. An obvious example from many of my own recordings is rhythm. Virtually everything I've released as C. Worth has involved ditching rhythm. To me, the removal of regular meter has an amazing tendency to make sounds emotive. Patterns of sound appeal to us on an intellectual level, and there's often tremendous delight in those patterns and tropes of music. But eliminating them can sometimes seem to get us closer to how we feel rather than how we think, or the experience can simply be strange enough to get us noticing other things. Irregularity in the workings of the natural world, for instance. The breeze against your face, the lap of waves against a hull. These are largely patternless patterns. Regular irregularity. Most of my recordings have some aspect of this exploration of natural





is of course a major idea in science fiction. I'm hoping we can find a way re-balance things without that sort of rupture. It's not at all clear to me how that would happen, though.

As to our creative processes, that's where I'm much more optimistic. Humankind's creative spirit seems as healthy as ever to me. It does feel like popular culture is going through more of a phase of homogeneity than usual, though. Pop film and music in particular are just absurdly uniform now.

Absurdly! But that all has everything to do with the increasing corporatization of our society in general rather than with any creative ennui, I think. Underground art is thriving, as best as I can tell.

Frederick: I am wondering if you could discuss 1) the role that you see homegrown art / music / creativity playing in the culture and are there some specific examples that intrigue you. Also please discuss your own creative projects and the music that you release into the world (and maybe the music that you don't release into the world).

Cee: I love art and music of all kinds and I'm sympathetic and indebted to artists and musicians at every level, but I increasingly find underground and homespun work to be the most admirable and intriguing. By and large this work is done completely absent any kind of market ambitions or expectations, and most of the time its motivations are consequently simpler and more genuine. The majority of people working this way

## #9. Wheaties Mouseketeer Records

From Wheaties in 1956, these are believed to be the first cut-out records to appear on cereal boxes. There were multiple versions including Mickey Mouse singing "The Gadget Tree", Chip 'N Dale performing "Ten Little Indians" and Donald Duck crooning "Donald Duck's Song". The records were played at 78 rpm (rotations per minute).

## #8. Honey-Comb Ghost Stories Record

In 1977 (or possibly 1978), Honey-Comb was scaring the cereal out of children with a series of Ghost Story records. Stories included The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, The Miser's Gold and The Hitchhiker. The stories were told by Wade Denning who was a prolific jingle writer at the time. His most famous jingle was a 6-note instrumental piece for Maxwell House Coffee which mimicked the sound of percolating coffee.

## #7. The Toucan Sam Workout

This is one of three Toucan Sam cut-out records that were available on the back of Froot Loops boxes in 1983. The other two were "Toucan Sam Takes You On A Listening Safari" and "Toucan Sam At The Big Race". According to graphics on this record, the workout consists of putting your hands on your head, touching your toes, a little marching, touching your nose and hopping on one foot.

## #6. Post Cereals Bobby Sherman Records

Bobby Sherman was a teen heartthrob in the late 60's and early 70's. In 1970, Post capitalized on his appeal to young people by putting records of his songs on the boxes of

multiple cereals, including Honey-Comb and the now-defunct Cinnamon Raisin Bran. There were 4 different records available, each with 5 songs. Some of those songs included "Easy Come Easy Go", "Hey Mr. Sun, ""La La La", "July Seventeen", "Bubblegum and Braces" and "Little Woman".



Cee: I guess it depends on what we mean by “being in the moment.” One could argue that as a culture we are too much in the moment—that the demands of social media, personal devices, and the constant, unbroken stream of political news fixate our attention only on the ever-updating, ever-notifying present. So that consequently we’ve lost our ability to contemplate before reacting, which often requires meditation on the past and consideration of potential futures: the first an act of learning and the second of imagination. Or, if we haven’t lost that contemplative ability altogether, that it is alarmingly atrophied. So I think it’s a matter of how we approach the moment we find ourselves in. I thought enough about this a couple of years ago that I based a recording project on it, one that means a lot to me. I thought then that it was an essential problem of our time, and I still do.

And yes, it affects our relationships with nature and the physical world tremendously. Human history has been largely about overcoming the challenges of nature, but now we’ve come to a moment in which we find we might have overcorrected, and live too much inside artificially constructed environments, or inside constructs generally. To me, what’s essential about spending time in natural environments is to return to the world as it actually is. A homecoming. I think that’s why, incidentally, modern cultures are so interested in post-apocalyptic stories. There is a longing there to reset conditions back to a more “natural” state. It’s not an accident that these stories started appearing around the time of the industrial revolution. Mary Shelley is well-known for the technologically anxious *Frankenstein*, but she also wrote one of the earliest apocalypse yarns, **The Last Man**. The anxiety and the longing go hand-in-hand. Now obviously (to most people, that is; setting the Kaczynskis of the world aside), the literal catastrophic return to a state of nature would be just about the worst possible outcome. And the fact that our wish to escape nature may ironically lead us to exactly that sort of outcome is

Some seem to view it as a rejection of their culture—a kind of technological snub—or miracle refusal, like missionaries bringing medicine to the afflicted only to have it dashed out onto the ground. Others worriedly invoke “safety,” as though the mechanics and dangers of the world were somehow materially different now than they were before 1995 and carrying electronics on one’s person at all times is now fundamental to survival, anything less being wantonly reckless. Some genuinely mean well. Mostly though I suspect people just find it inconvenient to not have command of someone else’s attention whenever they desire it. But I think being temporarily unreachable is my birthright, and guard my solitude jealously. I also think self-reliance and increasing competence are some of the few benefits of getting older, and I’m not ready to surrender my agency like that. It’s also really not that big of a deal. I get by just fine. I’m no Luddite. In fact I love computers, and am pretty active with several open source projects both on the development and advocacy fronts. I like technology; I just want to limit its mediation of my perspective on reality as best as I can, to the extent that I’m able.

In more active terms, though, I try to disconnect from things by retreating into wilderness as much as I can these days, usually in the form of an extended backpacking trip or by renting a backcountry cabin for a while. Increasingly, getting into the backcountry is one of the only things I can do to really feel at ease with myself. So much so that I’ve been plotting the construction of a remote cabin pretty seriously lately. It’s the kind of thing that can easily become a fiasco—which I’m known for!—so I’m trying to take a measured approach in spite myself.

Frederick: Do you think that as a culture we have lost our connection to “being in the moment”? and if so, is this affecting our relationships with nature and the elements? Is it affecting our creative processes?

## **#5. Super Sugar Crisp Archies Record**

In 1969, boxes of Super Sugar Crisp featured cut-outs of “The Archies Record” There were multiple versions of “The Archies Record” each with 4 songs. One included the mega-hit “Sugar Sugar.” Another featured “Everything’s Archie”, the theme song for the animated series “The Archie Show”. Archies records could also be found on the back of Alpha Bits cereal.

## **#4. Post Monkees Records**

In 1970, the Monkees TV series had been finished for two years, but repeats of the show were popular as part of Saturday morning programming. Those repeats were sponsored by Post. That same year, the cereal company put cut-out Monkees records on the back of their Rice Krinkles, Alpha Bits and Honey-Comb cereals. There were 3 different records, each with 4 songs. Hits on the records included “The Monkees Theme”, “I’m Not Your Steppin’ Stone”, “Last Train To Clarksville” and “I’m A Believer”.

## **#3. Post Cereals Jackson 5 Records**

The obvious leader in cereal box records was Post Cereals. In the early 1970's, they had their highest profile records featuring the wildly popular Motown band The Jackson 5. These records appeared on the back of Alpha Bits, Super Sugar Crisp and Frosted Rice Krinkles Cereals. The cut-outs included some of the Jackson 5's biggest hits like “ABC”, “I’ll Be There” and “Never Can Say Goodbye.” Post's association with The Jackson 5 went beyond flexi records. The group appeared in commercials for Alpha Bits.



## #2. Sugar Bears Cut-Out Record

The Sugar Bears were a made-for-cereal pop band. Its members included Sugar Bear, Shoobee Bear, Doobee Bear and Honey Bear. There were 5 different Sugar Bears records available on the back of select boxes of Super Sugar Crisp. In 1972, the Sugar Bears went 'outside the box' to release an actual album, *Presenting The Sugar Bears*. Kim Carnes, later famous for the song "Bette Davis Eyes" preformed the female vocals.

## #1. The Monsters Go Disco

On this 1979 record, Count Chocula, Frankenberry and Boo Berry are sitting around "frightfully lonely" on a Saturday night when they decide to go disco dancing. In the 4-minute adventure, they eventually win a dance contest and Frankenberry is given the nickname Franken-Boogie. There were three different Monster Adventure records found in select boxes of Count Chocula, Frankenberry and Boo Berry cereals. The other records were "Count Chocula Goes To Hollywood" and "Monster Adventures In Outer Space."

Cee: Absolutely, and self-reliance, too. The latter principle is absolutely fundamental to the American Idea, and virtually nobody even talks about it anymore. But I can find my way to the grocery store just fine, thanks, and I can make up my own damn mind about what it means to live in the 21st century.



Frederick: We were discussing technology and its points of concern on Facebook; thanks for agreeing to do an interview for my Tin Can Telephone zine - so a good place to start out would be: are there ways in which you unplug from the current cultural norms of technology to live life more intentionally?

Cee: Well, I have opted out of using cell phones, that's probably the most glaring example. Most people I encounter, at least here in the densely populated Mid-Atlantic region of the country, consider it a pretty shocking eccentricity. Not quite on the level of going without electricity, but somewhere down the street from there. Many are actually annoyed or angered by it, which still surprises and fascinates me. It can really offend people.



## Interview: C. Worth

One of the topics that I'm always musing about has to do with how technology is changing us. I was conversing back & forth on Facebook with C. Worth, who has released music on Gertrude Tapes, unread, and numerous labels ... music that resonated with me from the first note onwards. Very quickly I realized that it was imperative that this conversation continue in print form, in this zine. How ironic that zines or aspects of zines can be birthed online and in digital media. While highly skeptical of technology and being an inner (just not outer) luddite, I do appreciate how technology is blending together elements of older and newer media. I am including the conversation that leads into a wonderful interview.

DJ Frederick: I refuse to own a cell phone. First and foremost, how safe is the frequency radiation? These things are essentially high frequency transmitters. Secondly, I can do without enriching yet another media corporation. And thirdly, I already struggle with enough addictions. Oh - and exactly how safe are all these cell towers in the environment?

Cee: I have never owned or carried one either. Virtually every day of my life I am browbeaten about this by people who are so offended by it that they seem to suggest it is somehow evidence of a moral failing. For me, I simply never want to feel as though I can't leave my house and carry out my day without having to rely on having some electronic appliance on my person at all times.

DJ Frederick: I think they're called cell phones because people become prisoners to them. I'll vote for freedom any day.



## How to Do a Sugar Detox

Recently based on some health issues and being seriously overweight I decided it was time to make a change in my eating habits. After researching nutrients, how people gain weight, and the effects of processed foods, my studies took me to a conclusion that I knew all along: sugar is making me unhealthy and sugar needs to be minimized / deleted from my food sources. I don't typically go into these kinds of subjects in Tin Can Telephone but after collecting all those cereal box records (and maybe consuming the cereal!) here are some self-care steps toward a sugar detox for improved sense of well-being.

### Make a decision to detox

Do you eat when you're not hungry? Experience a food coma after eating? Feel bad about your eating habits or avoid certain activities because of your eating? Get withdrawal symptoms if you cut down or stop eating sugar or flour? Need more and more of same bad foods just to feel good? The third is the FLC Quiz (or the Toxicity Quiz). FLC stands for Feel Like Crap. FLC Syndrome has a list of symptoms including bloating, gas, reflux, irritable bowel, joint or muscle pain, brain fog, memory or mood problems, sinus or allergy symptoms and more. Millions of us have FLC Syndrome and don't know we are only a few days away from health and happiness.

### Go cold turkey

There is no way to handle a true physiological addiction except to stop it completely. Addicts can't have just one line of cocaine or just one drink.

Newfoundman: I struggle with whether or not I want to be a live act more times than not. I'm happy with Newfoundman being a recording project first and a live act as a distant second. But generally, when I have taken these songs out live, no two shows have been the same. I'll mess with different renditions of the same songs - different keys, making quiet songs loud and loud songs quiet. It's really, its own thing separate from the recordings I put together.

That being said, most of the arrangements from Aurora were arranged with my live feel in mind. You've got your lead guitar, your rhythm, a bass and either drums or a drum machine in the background. When I take these songs out it's just me and the samples, I record for the set that I feed through my board.



DJ Frederick: That's what I noticed - a shift in musical tone more than emotional tone but hopefulness increasing as the record progresses. My next question is: There is a depth and maturity in your songwriting. How long have you been writing songs and creating music? What was your first music release to the world?

Newfoundman: I started writing songs when I was 16, so seven years ago now. Back then I was writing mostly acoustic arrangements (which carried over into my first Newfoundman release in 2016). I was always uploading things online under one name or another, but it wasn't until I started making music as Newfoundman that I started getting any response to that. But to answer your question, I uploaded an EP to bandcamp back in 2013 that I'm still kicking myself for deleting (I've lost it altogether now). It wasn't any good, but it'd be fun to still be able to hold onto that stuff.

DJ Frederick: What formats do you prefer when releasing music? What are your thoughts on releasing physical music in the digital age?

Newfoundman: For convenience's sake, I love the affordances of digital releases. I know for a fact that my music has been downloaded as far away as Australia and Japan and has been played on radio stations in Luxembourg. I mean, how cool is that? That being said, there's something special about holding my music in my hands, too. That's why I'm forever grateful for WTTP choosing to release *Thrown By This Eastern Wind* on cassette, and why I always try and keep some CDs handy. How weird is it that even a CD has charm now?

DJ Frederick: What are your live gigs like and do you enjoy playing out? Also what types of music resonate with you other than your own expressive creations?

## **Don't drink your calories**

Any form of liquid sugar calories is worse than solid food with sugar or flour. Think of it as mainlining sugar directly to your liver. It turns off a fat storage machine in your liver, leading to dreaded belly fat. You don't feel full, so you eat more all day and you crave more sugar and carbs. It's also the single biggest source of sugar calories in our diet. That includes sodas, juices other than green vegetable juice, sports drinks, sweetened teas or coffees. One 20-ounce soda has 15 teaspoons of sugar; Gatorade contains 14 teaspoons of the stuff in one bottle. One can of soda a day increases a kid's chance of being obese by 60 percent and a woman's chance of type 2 diabetes by 80 percent.

## **Power up the day with protein**

Protein, protein, protein at every meal — especially breakfast — is the key to balancing blood sugar and insulin and cutting cravings.

## **Eat unlimited carbs (the right ones)**

Vegetables are carbs & you get to eat as much as you want. Unlimited refills! There is one catch. I only mean the non-starchy veggies such as greens, the broccoli family (cauliflower, kale, collards, etc.), asparagus, green beans, mushrooms, onions, zucchini, tomatoes, fennel, eggplant, artichokes, peppers, etc. What's out are potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash and beets — just for 10 days. Also skip grains and beans for 10 days. It supercharges the results so you feel great.

## Replace sugar with fat

It seems we have been lied to by the food industry which is every bit as toxic as “Big Pharma”. Fat doesn’t make you fat, sugar does. Fat makes you full, balances your blood sugar and is necessary for fueling your cells. Along with protein, have good fats at every meal and snack including nuts and seeds (which also contain protein), extra virgin olive oil, coconut butter, avocados, and omega 3 fats from fish.

## Be prepared

You never want to be in a food emergency when your blood sugar is dropping and you find yourself near fast food places and vending machines. You need an Emergency Life Pak filled with protein, good fats, and good snacks like packets of Artisana nut butters and coconut butter, almonds, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, salmon jerky or turkey jerky, a can of wild salmon or sardines and unsweetened wild blueberries.

## Swap distress for de-stress

*If you are stressed, your hormones go crazy. Cortisol goes up which makes you hungry, causes belly fat storage and leads to type 2 diabetes. Studies show that taking deep breaths activates a special nerve, called the vagus nerve, that shifts your metabolism from fat storage to fat burning and quickly moves you out of the stress state. And all you have to do is take a deep breath. My Take Five Breathing Break is something you can do anywhere, anytime. Simply take five slow deep breaths – in to the count of five, out to the count of five. Five times. That’s it. Do this before every meal. Watch what happens!*

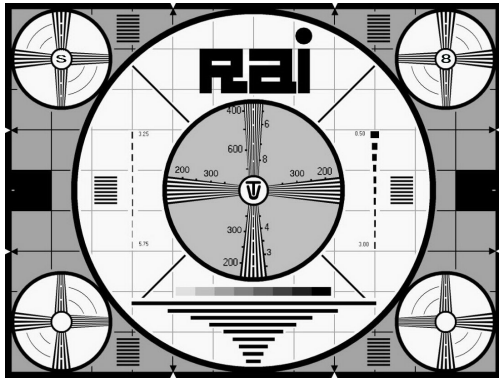
## Interview: Newfoundman

One of the highlights thusfar of creating our cottage industry music label Why The Tapes Play Records has been releasing the music of Avery Elford aka Newfoundman. We released his generous EP *Thrown By This Eastern Wind* in a split with Silent Island. I’m very pleased to say that he agreed to an interview for this edition of Tin Can Telephone.

DJ Frederick: My first question is about your new release Aurora - it all seems a very melancholy affair until "Winter on the Walls" when the mood shifts and catches fire: what is your process like when sequencing the songs for a release?

Newfoundman: I think there's a pretty clear distinction between the first half of the album and the second, so you're definitely onto something. Visualizing the album's timeline, I think it kind of takes you from sunset into sunrise through a rollercoaster night of sorts. There's definitely some exasperation in "Keep" (the first song) that carries on through the first set of tracks. And "Winter on the Walls" is a kind of up-and-down song in and of itself. There's something hopeful there, but it's also pretty melancholy. The last sequence of that song, there's these distorted guitars that kind of explode in for the only time on the record, that wasn't planned at all. I think it came out of how much these songs drove me crazy at times. For a long time I hated every take I tried to record and couldn't get anything to come together, but finishing that song was a turning point. The rest of the album - it's not a happy affair all the time, but I think the final run of four songs have more love and hopefulness going for them.





The Stranger was essentially Doctor Who without the name (due to BBC copyrights). Colin Baker portrayed the enigmatic and mysterious Stranger (who is never named) brilliantly. In the opening story, Summoned by Shadows, he is sullen, solitary and camped out on a bleak, desolate planet with his erstwhile companion Miss Brown (Nicola Bryant who also played the sixth Doctor's companion Peri). Miss Brown is also everything that Peri is not: self-assured and sophisticated.

How they travel from planet to planet is never revealed, however most of us can easily imagine a TARDIS hiding somewhere just off-screen. The Stranger is clearly in self-exile, after unexplored catastrophes. The fact that the character and his circumstances remain a mystery during the first three episodes of this series is down to moody and atmospheric acting, and solid screenwriting. By **In Memory Alone**, the third episode, both the Stranger and Miss Brown have even lost their own identities, finding themselves suffering from amnesia and stranded in a surreal train station conversing with a menacing holograph who looks (outwardly) like a perfect British gentleman.

The first three stories in the series are the most imaginative and fully realized of any "amateur" Doctor Who production; released straight to VHS in the early 1990s to fans who were bitter after the BBC cancellation, demand could not keep up with supply and the series quickly went out of print. Producer / director Bill Baggs also released an even more ambitious Doctor Who related project called **The Airzone Solution** – a complicated ecological thriller that featured many former actors and actresses from Doctor Who. The first three of the Stranger stories are highly recommended if you can find them to watch! Unfortunately the final three Stranger stories take the series in a very unfortunate direction—I just pretend they didn't happen and stay with the first three which stand alone wonderfully.

Since the 1990's I've basically thrown a rock through my television screen, may it rust in pieces.

## Put out the fire of inflammation

Studies show that inflammation triggers blood sugar imbalances, insulin resistance, pre-diabetes and type 2 diabetes. The most common source of inflammatory foods other than sugar, flour and trans fats are hidden food sensitivities. The most common culprits are gluten and dairy. We often crave the foods we're allergic to. Without them we feel lousy and want more. Quit gluten and dairy for ten days. Getting off them isn't easy, but after just two to three days without them you'll have renewed energy, relief from cravings, and will see many of your common symptoms disappear.

## Get your zzzs

Getting less sleep drives sugar and carb cravings by affecting your appetite hormones. In studies, depriving students of just two hours of the recommended eight hours of sleep led to a rise in hunger hormones, a decrease in appetite-suppressing hormones and big cravings for sugar and refined carbs. You want more energy if you don't sleep, so you go toward quickly absorbed sugars. Sleep is the best way to fight against the drive to overeat. You literally can sleep your cravings and your weight away.

As I write this zine I weigh 365 pounds. At my age of 60 that's practically a death sentence. My weight has been an issue for most of my life; even though I used to be athletic, thyroid issues, depression, and carb/sugar addictions to numb emotional pain have taken their toll. I will try and keep people updated on my progress in this or other zines. I'm not the center of the Universe, so I really struggle to share much about myself through writing, however just the act of expressing is an act of healing.



## The Tin Can Telephone Department of Almost Forgotten Technology

**The abacus** (plural abaci or abacuses), also called a counting frame, is a calculating tool that was in use centuries before the adoption of the written modern numeral system and is still widely used by merchants, traders and clerks in Asia, Africa, and elsewhere. Today, abaci are often constructed as a bamboo frame with beads sliding on wires, but originally they were beans or stones moved in grooves in sand or on tablets of wood, stone, or metal. The user of an abacus is called an abacist.

The period 2700–2300 BC saw the first appearance of the Sumerian abacus, a table of successive columns which delimited the successive orders of magnitude of their sexagesimal number system. Some scholars point to a character from the Babylonian cuneiform which may have been derived from a representation of the abacus. It is the belief of Old Babylonian scholars such as Carruccio that Old Babylonians "may have used the abacus for



## Fannish Fanzine Moments: The Stranger Series

Confession time: once upon a time I was a rabid Doctor Who fan, specifically a fan of the original series which began in 1963 and was eventually cancelled in 1989. I've seen every existing episode, every spinoff (even K9 & Company), every documentary related to the original series, and every fan-made video. And there are a lot of fan-made videos: from a series with a female doctor (30 years before Jody Whittaker) to stories featuring the Brigadier, and especially – my favorite fan produced video: **The Stranger Series** by Bill Baggs which actually starred Doctor Who actors.

The Stranger is played by Colin Baker (the sixth Doctor) whose time on the series was a fiasco unparalleled in Doctor Who history. The stories were terrible, his acting was over-the-top, and for many fans it was painful to watch. However, the no-budget *Stranger Series* showed exactly what the sixth Doctor could have been had the original series not descended into a spiral of incompetency.

Despite the introduction of the ballpoint pen in the early 1900s, fountain pens maintained their dominance as the go-to writing instrument up until the mid-point of the century. It was not until the 1960s, when the ballpoint pen's reliability increased, and its price decreased, that fountain pen sales began their long and steady decline in the United States. While they're still widely used by students in private schools in England and the rest of Europe, in America the fountain pen is largely seen as more of a collector's item, a status symbol, or the focus of a twee hobby. However, thanks to the internet's ability to connect enthusiasts, the fountain pen has seen something of a resurgence in the U.S. Today you can find countless forums and blogs dedicated to the virtues of this classic writing instrument.

Think you might like to branch out from your ballpoint? Here are a few reasons to give fountain pens a try:

It feels better. Because you don't have to press down as hard to write as you do with a ballpoint pen, writing with the fountain variety is much easier on the hand. It allows for extended periods of writing without fatigue. It's easier to get in the flow, when using something that truly flows.

It's better for the environment. With a ballpoint pen, once you use up all the ink, you toss it into the trash. While you can buy disposable fountain pens, most fountain pens aren't meant to be thrown away. When you run out of ink, just refill the reservoir and you're back in business.

There's something about a fountain pen that inspires you to take care of it. The hefty price tag of some models certainly has something to do with that. But the fountain pen's storied tradition provides an aura of timelessness and permanence that encourages the owner to safeguard it; it may even become a family heirloom. Fountain pens make cursive handwriting look better. Besides reducing fatigue, the light touch and flowing hand movements that are necessitated by a fountain pen make your handwriting look better.



the operations of addition and subtraction; however, this primitive device proved difficult to use for more complex calculations".

Around the world, abaci have been used in pre-schools and elementary schools as an aid in teaching the numeral system and arithmetic. In Western countries, a bead frame similar to the Russian abacus but with straight wires and a vertical frame has been common. It is still often seen as a plastic or wooden toy. This type of abacus uses a row of 10 beads to represent arithmetical columns; thus the top row represents units, the second, tens, the third, hundreds, and so on. Most of these abaci consist of 10 rows, thus count up to 11,111,111,110.



**Shortwave (SW) radio** operates on the frequencies between the AM and FM bands. Shortwave has the unique characteristic of traveling very long distances making it a powerful medium to reach the masses from even one transmitter.

#### SHORTWAVE RADIO:

- \* transcends political barriers and government restrictions
- \* transcends religious barriers and cultural opposition
- \* transcends geographical barriers (e.g. deserts, mountains, jungles, islands, etc.)
- \* can provide news & information when local infrastructure is destroyed by natural disasters (hurricane, earthquake, etc.)

## Selected shortwave shows worth listening to

**The Shortwave Report** with Dan Roberts – a home-made thirty minute news roundup from around the world featuring underreported news you will hear only on shortwave stations. The Shortwave Report can be downloaded from [outfarpress.com](http://outfarpress.com)

**Voice of the Report of the Week** – host John Jurasek is barely into his 20's but is already a veteran of shortwave broadcasting. VORW is the show that ye olde DJ Frederick wishes he had created – friendly, musically ambitious, with a wide, diverse audience that tunes in every week.

**World of Radio** – I have no idea how Glenn Hauser sifts through thousands of emails every week, surfs the web constantly, and communicates with the most remote radio stations on the planet, and like clockwork records World of Radio and maintains an encyclopedic website of current shortwave information. Glenn has almost single-handedly kept information about shortwave listening flowing into our eyes and ears. Visit [worldofradio.com](http://worldofradio.com) for much more information.



### Fountain Pens

While the earliest record of a fountain-like pen dates from the 10th century, fountain pens as we know them today didn't exist until the late 19th century. In 1884, an American named Lewis Waterman patented the first practical model after supposedly having a sales contract ruined by a leaky precursor. Before Waterman's version, fountain pens were plagued with ink spills and blots, and were unreliable and inconvenient.



The main problem of earlier fountain pens centered on airflow — there wasn't enough. Fountain pens work by managing the rate at which the ink flows through the pen. When the pen is held at an upright angle, ink from the reservoir is drawn downward by gravity, and goes through the feed and to the nib in a controlled fashion. Unless air is brought into the reservoir to replace the ink as it is used, a vacuum will build up that stops the flow. Waterman solved this airflow issue by cutting a series of three fissures in the pen's feed. This created a capillary-esque mechanism that functioned by drawing ink into these small channels at the same time that air came back in over the fissures and entered the reservoir. The modern fountain pen was born. Though Waterman's innovation made fountain pens much more effective and convenient to write with, filling the pen remained a messy and tedious affair. You had to unscrew a portion of the barrel and use an eyedropper to fill the reservoir drop by drop. At the turn of the 20th century, companies began introducing self-filling reservoirs that allowed users to put the nib in the inkbottle and fill the reservoir by pulling a lever or twisting the barrel.